

Supplemental Report 4

Flanner House Elementary School Detailed Performance Assessment and Profile



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▪ Grades served in 2003-04	K-5
▪ Enrollment in 2003-04	165 students
▪ Grades served at capacity	K-7
▪ Maximum school size at capacity	300 students

This supplemental report presents information about the school in three sections:

- Flanner House Elementary School's Students (enrollment and demographic information)
- Performance at Flanner House Elementary School
- Detailed Description of Flanner House Elementary School's Programs and Activities (as provided by the school)

Flanner House Elementary School's Students

Figure S4-1. Enrollment and demand for the Flanner House Elementary School

	Number of students
Maximum possible enrollment in 2003-04 pursuant to charter	190
Number of students enrolled in 2003-04 ¹	165
Number of students on waiting list as of spring 2004 for 2004-05 school year ²	52

¹Source: Indiana Department of Education website, based on school's Pupil Enrollment Count reported every October.

²Source: School self-report of data, as of spring 2004. 2004 was the first time this information was collected in this manner; therefore, waiting list information for the 2003-04 school year is not available.

Figure S4-2. Flanner House Elementary School student composition

Gender ¹		Race & Ethnicity ¹				Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch ¹	Special Education ²	Limited English Proficient ³
Male	Female	African-American	Hispanic	Caucasian	Other			
41.2%	58.8%	98.2%	0%	0.6%	1.2%	77.0%	5.5%	0%

Note: See main report for comparative data.

¹Source: Indiana Department of Education website, based on school's Pupil Enrollment Count reported every October.

²Source: Indiana Department of Education Division of Exceptional Learners, count reported December 2003.

³Source: Indiana Department of Education Division of Language and Minority Programs, count reported March 2004.

Performance at Flanner House Elementary School

The section below describes Flanner House Elementary School's performance over its second school year by addressing the common performance indicators in the Mayor's Charter School Performance Framework. The complete Performance Framework may be viewed on-line at <http://www.indygov.org/eGov/Mayor/Education/Charter/Accountability/2004/>.

In some areas, this section also provides information about the school's performance in 2002-03 as compared to its performance in 2003-04. For additional information on how performance has changed, view the *2003 Accountability Report on Mayor-Sponsored Charter Schools*, also available on-line at the website listed above.

Is the educational program a success?

Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress, as measured by the Indiana Department of Education's system of accountability?

Performance on the statewide assessment. Figure S4-3 displays the percentage of Flanner House Elementary 3rd and 5th graders who received passing scores on ISTEP+ examinations in the fall of 2003 and, where applicable, the percentage passing in 2002. It also shows the results for Indianapolis Public Schools and all Indiana public schools. While 2002 data are provided, it is not

possible to use these results to measure individual students' progress over time because each grade's test results pertain to different children in 2002 versus 2003. Fall 2003 was the first time Flanner House Elementary students currently enrolled in grades 3 and 5 took the ISTEP+, and thus data on how these same students previously performed on ISTEP+ are not available. In the future, as ISTEP+ is administered in all grades, the Mayor's Office will be able to determine how much progress over time Flanner House Elementary students are making on these tests.

Figure S4-3. Percentage of students in Flanner House Elementary School ("FHE"), Indianapolis Public Schools ("IPS"), and Indiana ("IN") passing ISTEP+ tests at the *beginning* of the fall semester^{1,2}

	English			Math			Both (English & Math)			Science		
	FHE	IPS	IN	FHE	IPS	IN	FHE	IPS	IN	FHE	IPS	IN
3 rd Graders												
2003	63%	62%	74%	60%	65%	71%	49%	52%	63%			
2002	67%	58%	72%	67%	57%	67%	52%	44%	59%			
5 th Graders ³												
2003										25%	32%	61%

Source: Indiana Department of Education.

Note: Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number.

¹Since 2003 is the first year these students have taken the ISTEP+, it is not possible to use these results as a measure of student progress at the Flanner House Elementary School.

²Blank areas denote that the applicable grade was not tested in the particular subject area.

³Since 2003 was the first year Indiana students took the ISTEP+ in 5th grade science, historical data are not available.

Adequate Yearly Progress. As required by the federal No Child Left Behind legislation, the Indiana Department of Education has determined Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for all Indiana schools, including charter schools in operation during the 2002-03 school year. The Department determines whether each school makes AYP based on the percentage of students passing the English and mathematics ISTEP+ tests. In addition, each elementary and middle school must make AYP by raising or maintaining high attendance rates and each high school must raise or maintain high graduation rates. Flanner House Elementary did not receive an AYP rating because it tested fewer than 30 students total in 2002. As the school grows, the total number of students tested in comparison years will increase, and so AYP determinations will be made in the future.

Are students making substantial gains over time?

Test score analysis. Flanner House Elementary School administered the Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) exam to its students in grades two through five in fall 2003 and spring 2004. Each number in Figure S4-4 indicates the percentage change in the average test score achieved in a particular grade and subject from fall to spring. For example, the +7.9 in the first row indicates that the average reading score for students who were 2nd graders was 7.9% higher in spring 2004 than in fall 2003.

Figure S4-4. Percentage change in average NWEA MAP scores between fall 2003 and spring 2004 at Flanner House Elementary School

	2 nd Grade	3 rd Grade	4 th Grade	5 th Grade
Reading	+7.9	+5.4	+3.3	+4.1
Math	+7.0	+3.9	+1.9	+4.3
Language	+6.4	+1.7	+0.1	+1.9

Source: "Progress of Indianapolis Charter Schools: An Analysis of National Test Score Data 2004," prepared by New American Schools, Alexandria, VA, 2004.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on test score analysis.

Figure S4-4 shows that students made progress, on average, between fall 2003 and spring 2004 in all grades and all subjects tested. But how large were these gains? Analysts at New American Schools (NAS) used two methods to answer that question. First, they compared the progress of Flanner House Elementary's students to that of other students in Indiana and nationally who took the same exams at the same points in their academic careers ("comparative gains"). Second, they determined whether students' gains were large enough for them to reach proficiency by the end of eighth grade ("sufficient gains").

Comparative Gains. Since the NWEA MAP is a national standardized test, we can ask the following question: if we ranked all the students in Indiana and across the country who took the NWEA MAP, where would *Flanner House Elementary students stand on average* in those rankings?

Figures S4-5 and S4-6 provide the answer. For example, the first row of Figure S4-5 shows how 2nd graders at Flanner House Elementary performed in reading. In fall 2003, on average 2nd graders at Flanner House Elementary scored as well as or better than 20% of all students in Indiana in reading. We call this number, 20, Flanner House Elementary's "Fall 2003 Average Percentile" for 2nd graders in reading. The next column shows that by spring 2004, on average Flanner House Elementary 2nd graders performed as well as or better than 28% of all students in Indiana. The school's "Spring 2004 Average Percentile" was 28. What does this mean? It means that, on average, Flanner House Elementary's 2nd graders *moved up in the statewide ranking* in reading between fall 2003 and spring 2004. So on the right side of Figure S4-5, we indicate that Flanner House Elementary students "gained ground" versus students in Indiana. Figure S4-6 displays the same information, but compares students' performance to their peers *nationally*.

As displayed in Figures S4-5 and S4-6, it is evident that Flanner House Elementary students, on average, gained ground on their Indiana and national peers in some grades and subjects, but lost ground in several others. The fact that students, on average, lost ground in some areas does not mean that these students did not progress in these grades and subjects – they progressed (except in 4th grade language), as Figure S4-4 illustrates, but not as much as their peers in Indiana and nationally.

Figure S4-5. INDIANA comparison: Academic progress of Flanner House Elementary School students, fall 2003 through spring 2004

Grade/ subject		Fall 2003 Average Percentile	Spring 2004 Average Percentile	Gained ground vs. students in Indiana	Stayed even with students in Indiana	Lost ground vs. students in Indiana
2 nd Grade	Reading	20	28	✓		
	Math	20	26	✓		
	Language	26	23			✓
3 rd Grade	Reading	23	30	✓		
	Math	34	21			✓
	Language	37	18			✓
4 th Grade	Reading	33	28			✓
	Math	48	32			✓
	Language	42	22			✓
5 th Grade	Reading	22	34	✓		
	Math	17	29	✓		
	Language	24	25	✓		

Source: "Progress of Indianapolis Charter Schools: An Analysis of National Test Score Data 2004," prepared by New American Schools, Alexandria, VA, 2004.

Note: Conclusions about whether students gained or lost ground were based on simple comparisons of fall and spring percentiles.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on test score analysis.

Figure S4-6. NATIONAL comparison: Academic progress of Flanner House Elementary School students, fall 2003 through spring 2004

Grade/ subject		Fall 2003 Average Percentile	Spring 2004 Average Percentile	Gained ground vs. students nationally	Stayed even with students nationally	Lost ground vs. students nationally
2 nd Grade	Reading	20	33	✓		
	Math	20	32	✓		
	Language	27	33	✓		
3 rd Grade	Reading	28	36	✓		
	Math	42	30			✓
	Language	40	28			✓
4 th Grade	Reading	36	33			✓
	Math	52	38			✓
	Language	47	31			✓
5 th Grade	Reading	26	39	✓		
	Math	23	35	✓		
	Language	29	35	✓		

Source: "Progress of Indianapolis Charter Schools: An Analysis of National Test Score Data 2004," prepared by New American Schools, Alexandria, VA, 2004.

Note: Conclusions about whether students gained or lost ground were based on simple comparisons of fall and spring percentiles.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on test score analysis.

Sufficient Gains. Are the students in this school making *sufficient gains* toward becoming proficient? It is not enough to know whether students made a year's worth of progress between 2003 and 2004. Some students, since they are starting behind, need to make *more* than a year's worth of progress in order to become proficient by the end of eighth grade. What proportion of the school's students is making the gains they need to make?

To find out, analysts projected each student's *future* gain based on the gain he or she achieved between fall 2003 and spring 2004 on the MAP exam. If the student continued to gain at that rate,

would he or she be proficient by the end of the 8th grade? If so, he or she made “sufficient gains.” Based on this analysis, NAS calculated the percentage of students who made sufficient gains in each subject and grade.

Figure S4-7 displays the results. For example, 100% of students who were 2nd graders in 2003-04 made sufficient gains in reading. That is, if these 2nd graders continue learning at the rate they did during this period, 100% of them will be proficient by the end of 8th grade. Of note, based on current gains, less than 50% of students in 4th and 5th grade will be proficient in language by the end of 8th grade.

Figure S4-7. Percentage of Flanner House Elementary School students achieving sufficient gains to become proficient by the end of 8th Grade, fall 2003 through spring 2004

	2 nd Grade	3 rd Grade	4 th Grade	5 th Grade
Reading	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Math	100.0%	84.6%	100.0%	69.6%
Language	70.4%	60.7%	42.9%	43.5%

Source: “Progress of Indianapolis Charter Schools: An Analysis of National Test Score Data 2004,” prepared by New American Schools, Alexandria, VA, 2004.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on test score analysis.

Is the organization effective and well-run?

Is the school in sound fiscal health? The Mayor’s Office commissioned a review of each school’s finances. A summary of the school’s finances, including financial statements, appears in Supplemental Report 6. Reviews by the outside accounting firm revealed that Flanner House Elementary School encountered challenges related to accounting and finance in 2003-04, including timely bill payments and accurate allocation of salaries and expenses between the school and the Flanner House Higher Learning Center. By June 30, 2004, however, the school satisfactorily resolved the issues related to the salary and expense allocations between both schools. The executive director of Flanner House, Inc. and the school’s business manager have worked with the school’s bookkeeper to implement new procedures for the 2004-05 school year to ensure that all expenses continue to be allocated correctly.

Fifty-two percent of parents surveyed at Flanner House Elementary School reported they are satisfied with the school’s finances while 25% reported they “don’t know.” On the 2003 surveys, 81% of parents reported their satisfaction in this area and just 11% reported they “don’t know.” At the same time, 15% of school staff surveyed in 2004 reported their satisfaction with school finances while 23% reported they “don’t know,” whereas in 2003 29% of staff reported their satisfaction.

Are the school’s student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong? The school continues to experience strong attendance. Its attendance rate was 97.2% in 2003-04, up from 96.3% in 2002-03 (see Figure S4-8). Eighty-six percent of parents surveyed at Flanner House in 2004 expressed their intention to continue to enroll their children in the school as long as the school serves students their children’s age, as compared to the 97% who expressed this intention in 2003. On a scale of 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (extremely likely), parents on average rated their likelihood of recommending the school to other parents or guardians as a good place to attend at 4.45. Staff members on average rated their likelihood at 4.39 on the same question. At the same

time, the school's official enrollment count as maintained by the Indiana Department of Education, 165 students, fell short of the school's maximum capacity of 190 students for 2003-04.

Figure S4-8. Flanner House Elementary School attendance rate in 2003-04 school year

	Attendance rate
Flanner House Elementary School ¹	97.2%
Indianapolis Public Schools ²	94.1%
Indiana schools ²	95.9%

Source: Indiana Department of Education website.

Is the school's Board active and competent in its oversight? The Mayor's Office conducted governance reviews of the Flanner House Elementary School by attending two Board meetings and reviewing the Board meeting minutes for the 2003-04 school year. The Board of Directors meets monthly to discuss issues related to the school and receive updates on the school's performance. Observations of meetings and a review of minutes indicated that the meetings consist primarily of routine reports, including reports on public relations, technology, education, and finance. The Executive Director of Flanner House, Inc. also provides a report, as does the Board's president. Each report informs the Board of developments since the prior meeting and upcoming events or deadlines. It was observed that Board members are engaged in discussions and ask thoughtful questions during these reports. When Board members asked questions that staff could not immediately answer, it was not clear how staff would conduct follow-up (if any) with the Board member to communicate the answer to the question. The governance reviews recommended that the school administration adopt a specific procedure to ensure that Board members' questions are answered satisfactorily immediately or to provide the appropriate follow-up with the Board regarding the questions after the meeting has ended.

A review of the Board meeting minutes from the 2003-04 school year showed that the Board is informed of events and issues related to the school, but did not demonstrate that the Board has a clear process for approving decisions. For example, the minutes reflect very few motions to approve or deny decisions.

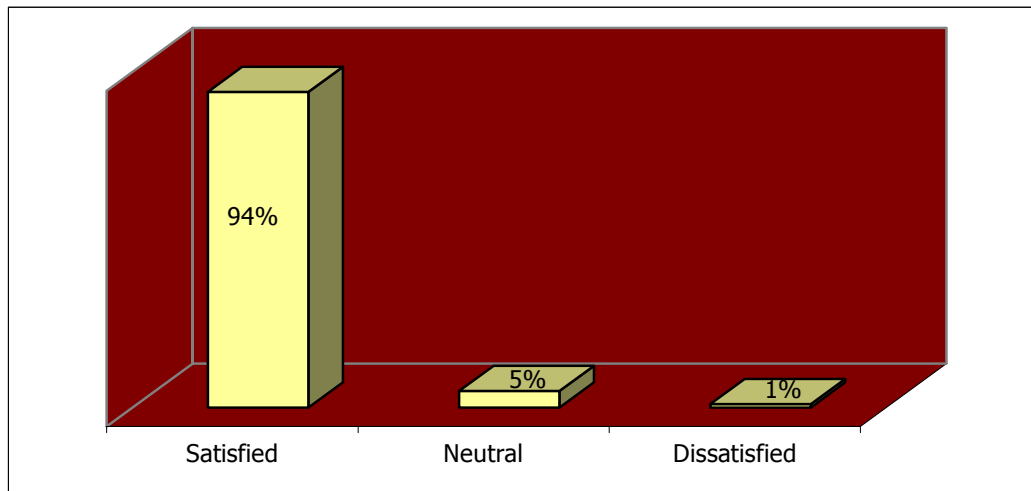
A review of the minutes also found many typographical errors and informal notes that could cause confusion for an external reader. Because the Board meeting minutes are public documents, the governance reviews advised that the school take proper care to ensure that the minutes are correct and orderly prior to approval by the Board.

In its observations of a Board meeting and review of minutes, the expert site team noted "...on-going discussion regarding hiring a consultant to lead the Board through a strategic planning process. It is not stated in the minutes the resolution of this discussion but it seems a very good time for the Board and the school to do strategic planning. Issues regarding space and resources might be considered, priorities set, and strategic plans developed."

Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school? Figure S4-9 shows how Flanner House Elementary parents responded to a question about their overall satisfaction with the charter school. Ninety-four percent of parents reported overall satisfaction with the school in the parent survey, down slightly from 97% in 2003, while the percentage of parents who were dissatisfied remained constant from 2003 to 2004. Figure S4-10 shows the percentage of parents who were satisfied with specific aspects of the school as well as the average satisfaction rate for each aspect.

Parents reported to the expert site visit team “high levels of satisfaction with and commitment to the school.” The team reported that all parents interviewed in the site visit “strongly agree that there are high expectations and that students are learning.” These parents “...feel a part of the school and report that the school is ‘exceeding’ or ‘going beyond’ their expectations in terms of children learning basic skills and respect for learning, themselves and others.” Overall, Flanner House Elementary parents reported to the site team “...being satisfied with the school, the staff, the educational experience their children are receiving, and their involvement in the school.” At the same time, the site team noted that parents would like the school to seek out more community-based learning opportunities and also would like to see more electives and a stronger physical education program with more equipment and competitive teams.

Figure S4-9. Overall parent satisfaction with Flanner House Elementary School



Source: All results are from confidential surveys of Mayor-sponsored charter school parents administered in spring 2003 by the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on survey protocol and analysis.

Note: Calculations do not include missing responses. “Satisfied” includes “somewhat satisfied” and “very satisfied” responses. “Dissatisfied” includes “somewhat dissatisfied” and “very dissatisfied” responses.

Figure S4-10. Parent satisfaction with features at Flanner House Elementary School

School Feature	Average rate of satisfaction ¹ (5=Very Satisfied)	Satisfied ²	Neutral	Dissatisfied ³
School size	4.44	88%	10%	2%
Class size	4.58	95%	5%	0%
Length of school day	4.48	94%	5%	1%
Length of school year	4.44	88%	11%	1%
Ability of school to fulfill mission	4.40	90%	7%	2%
Individualized attention	4.20	85%	7%	8%
Academic standards/expectations	4.51	94%	4%	2%
Curriculum	4.46	94%	2%	4%
Teaching quality	4.26	87%	5%	8%
Instructional quality, language arts	4.24	86%	6%	8%
Instructional quality, mathematics	4.33	90%	2%	7%
Materials to support curriculum	4.25	87%	11%	2%
Innovation in teaching practices	4.16	83%	10%	7%
Computers and other technology	3.32	45%	27%	24%
Classroom management/behavior	4.04	77%	12%	11%
Communication from the school	4.23	86%	6%	8%
Parent information about students	4.26	85%	9%	6%
Accessibility/openness to parents	4.52	94%	4%	2%
Parent participation opportunities	4.69	96%	2%	1%
Parent involvement	4.43	90%	7%	2%
Teacher/student school pride	4.51	92%	7%	1%
Relationship with local community	4.28	80%	17%	2%
Extracurricular activities	3.37	46%	29%	23%

Source: All results are from confidential surveys of Mayor-sponsored charter school parents administered in spring 2004 by the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on survey protocol and analysis.

Note: Calculations do not include missing responses. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding and "don't know" responses.

¹Satisfaction rated on a scale of 1-5: 1= very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = satisfied, 5 = very satisfied. Rating calculations do not include "don't know" responses.

²Includes "very satisfied" and "satisfied" responses.

³Includes "very dissatisfied" and "dissatisfied" responses.

Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?

Governance reviews conducted by the Mayor's Office showed that the school administration experienced challenges related to organizational leadership during the 2003-04 school year that made it difficult for the school to satisfactorily meet important obligations to the state and the Mayor's Office, as detailed in the next section of this supplemental report.

The school showed stronger performance in the area of academic leadership. According to the expert site visit team, the education director is the "heart" of the school, and she is reported to be a "strong and inspirational instructional leader." The team further noted that "she provides strong academic leadership, motivates an exemplary climate and culture, and effectively deals with the constraints on resources."

Three-quarters of staff reported in a survey that they were satisfied by the leadership provided by their school's administration, as compared to 86% of staff who expressed satisfaction in 2003. Of parents surveyed, 87% reported they were satisfied with the people running Flanner House Elementary School, down from 96% in 2003.

Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations related to: organizational structure and governance obligations; physical plants that are safe and conducive to learning; fair and appropriate pupil enrollment processes; reasonable and safe transportation options available to eligible students; and legal obligations related to access and services to special needs and English as a second language students?

Flanner House Elementary School satisfactorily met its obligations in 2003-04 in providing access to students across Indianapolis. Neither the Mayor's Office's internal systems nor the expert site visit team indicated any significant concerns related to these obligations. Figure S4-11 displays parent and staff survey responses to questions about school operations.

The school faced challenges, however, in meeting some of its important obligations to submit reports, make information available to the Mayor's Office and meet teacher licensure requirements. Of particular note, the school did not submit information to the Indiana Department of Education in a timely manner (e.g., as related to: average daily membership, textbook reimbursements, and other grants). In a few instances, the Department extended deadlines to accommodate the school; the school still struggled, however, to submit information by the extended deadline dates.

In 2003-04, three teachers on staff did not meet the certification requirements to teach in a charter school. Two of the teachers had completed undergraduate education programs but did not hold Indiana teaching licenses. In addition, one uncertified teacher was not in the process of enrolling in an approved Transition to Teaching program as required by Indiana charter law. The Mayor's Office worked closely with the school and the Indiana Professional Standards Board to address this issue. After careful review of the situation, the school has been advised by the Indiana Professional Standards Board that teachers who do not hold Indiana teaching licenses and who have not yet enrolled in a Transition to Teaching program should apply for and receive emergency licenses from the Professional Standards Board prior to the beginning of the 2004-05 school year in order to be eligible to teach in a charter school. The emergency licenses will then permit the teachers to work towards certification, either through Transition to Teaching or another approved certification program. To date, the school is still working to resolve this issue.

Overall, the school has not satisfactorily maintained its compliance binder, which is critical to the Mayor's Office's ability to determine whether the school has met its obligations. The binder contains all of the school's governance, management, and organizational documents and is reviewed by the Mayor's Office on a monthly basis to monitor school compliance with laws and other requirements. The school has, however, shown some progress toward improving the maintenance of the compliance binder.

Figure S4-11. Parent and school staff satisfaction with Flanner House Elementary School operations

School Feature	Parents				School Staff			
	Average rate of satisfaction ¹ (5=Very Satisfied)	Satisfied ²	Neutral	Dissatisfied ³	Average rate of satisfaction ¹ (5=Very Satisfied)	Satisfied ²	Neutral	Dissatisfied ³
Services for special needs students ^{4,5}	4.67	89%	11%	0%	3.00	17%	67%	17%
School leadership	4.46	87%	7%	6%	4.08	75%	17%	8%
School finances	3.94	52%	12%	11%	2.80	15%	31%	31%
Safety	4.45	92%	6%	2%	4.15	85%	8%	8%
School facilities	3.92	69%	15%	14%	2.92	23%	38%	38%
Enrollment process	4.34	86%	12%	0%	4.09	62%	23%	0%
Transportation ⁶	4.00	100%	0%	0%	3.88	42%	25%	0%

Source: All results are from confidential surveys of Mayor-sponsored charter school parents and staffs administered in spring 2004 by the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on survey protocol and analysis.

Note: Calculations do not include missing responses. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding and "don't know" responses.

¹Satisfaction rated on a scale of 1-5: 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = satisfied, 5 = very satisfied. Rating calculations do not include "don't know" responses.

²Includes "very satisfied" and "satisfied" responses.

³Includes "very dissatisfied" and "dissatisfied" responses.

⁴Special needs students include those for whom English is a second language or who have disabilities, academic difficulties, etc.

⁵Only parents of children with special needs in the charter school responded to this question. Only staff members with instructional responsibilities and students with special needs in their classroom responded to this question.

⁶Only parents whose children used the school's transportation services in the 2003-04 school year were asked to respond to this question. No parents at Flanner House Elementary School use the school's transportation system, yet some parents responded to this question and those results are provided here.

Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?

Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders? The site team reported that "parents, teachers, and administrators use similar words that indicate they have a similar understanding of the mission of Flanner House Elementary... which is to teach the 'whole child' and 'to help every child succeed.'" Students also reported "...having high standards and expectations, working hard, and knowing what they need to do to learn." The team reported that students "...appear confident as learners and they articulate an awareness that the school provides an important opportunity for them to prepare for college and life." In the focus groups, the team noted that "...students talk more about learning and outcomes and rarely talk about grades." The site team noted constituent remarks about how all children progress at the same pace in their learning. The team suggested that the school should "...provide information to help parents better understand how the school handles differences among children and the process that is used when a child does fall behind."

Ninety-two percent of staff members surveyed reported that they were aware of the goals of the school, up from 86% in 2003, and 83% believed the goals were being met across the school "very well" or "fairly well," up from 77% in 2003.

Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade? The team further reported that "classroom observations indicate that a variety of age- and grade-appropriate, teacher-specific learning experiences in these areas were being provided.

Activities were engaging and the majority of students were focused and on-task.” The school’s director of education and teachers reported to the site team that “...teachers have ‘ownership’ of the curriculum and that they have ‘freedom and independence’ in designing and providing standards-based lessons.” Teachers submit weekly lesson plans for the director of education’s review.

After reviewing school and classroom materials, the site team reported that “the curriculum focuses on language arts, science, history, and mathematics.... In other areas, teachers have developed the curriculum and have added many supplementary learning experiences, including parent-led projects.” At the same time, teachers reported that the curriculum could be strengthened with “...regularly scheduled classes and certified teachers for the special classes such as art, music, physical education.”

Teachers reported challenges related to differentiating instruction and meeting the needs of all students, particularly those with special needs. The site team recommended that the school identify ways to support teachers and provide them with more information, strategies and materials. Some teachers also reported “...confusion regarding their annual budget for materials and supplies.” The team recommended that “the director of education should continue to work with teachers to ensure that they understand the process, amounts, timelines and requirements associated with the use of the supplies and materials budget.” The school should also continue to respond to teacher needs for other supplementary materials, supplies, and equipment.

The team also found that “the education director, several teachers and some students in focus groups report that they do not like or enjoy the school-wide ‘Paragraph a Week’ writing process because it is repetitive and students find the process ‘boring.’” The team suggested that the school “...explore other writing systems and adopt one that is more challenging and effective in encouraging and structuring the development of student writing skills.”

As Figures S4-10 and S4-12 illustrate, nearly nine in ten Flanner House Elementary School parents reported that they were satisfied with their school’s materials to support the curriculum, while less than half of staff members also reported their satisfaction in this area.

Figure S4-12. School staff satisfaction with features at Flanner House Elementary School

School Feature	Average rate of satisfaction ¹ (5=Very Satisfied)	Satisfied ²	Neutral	Dissatisfied ³
School size	4.42	92%	0%	8%
Class size	4.42	92%	8%	0%
Length of school day	4.00	69%	23%	8%
Length of school year	3.75	67%	25%	8%
Ability of school to fulfill mission	3.69	62%	31%	8%
Individualized attention	4.08	92%	0%	8%
Academic standards/expectations	4.23	85%	8%	8%
Curriculum	4.23	85%	8%	8%
Teaching quality	4.33	92%	0%	8%
Instructional quality, language arts	4.31	85%	8%	8%
Instructional quality, mathematics	4.23	92%	0%	8%
Materials to support curriculum	3.38	46%	31%	23%
Innovation in teaching practices	3.54	54%	31%	15%
Computers and other technology	2.54	15%	31%	54%
Classroom management/behavior	3.67	67%	17%	17%
Communication from the school	3.92	75%	17%	8%
Parent information about students	3.62	62%	31%	8%
Accessibility/openness to parents	3.92	69%	23%	8%
Parent participation opportunities	4.15	85%	8%	8%
Parent involvement	3.62	62%	15%	23%
Teacher/student school pride	3.92	77%	15%	8%
Relationship with local community	3.92	69%	23%	8%
Extracurricular activities	2.69	15%	46%	38%

Source: All results are from confidential surveys of Mayor-sponsored charter school staffs administered in spring 2004 by the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on survey protocol and analysis.

Note: Calculations do not include missing responses. Satisfaction percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding and "don't know" responses.

¹Satisfaction rated on a scale of 1-5: 1= very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = satisfied, 5 = very satisfied. Rating calculations do not include "don't know" responses.

²Includes "very satisfied" and "satisfied" responses.

³Includes "very dissatisfied" and "dissatisfied" responses.

Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction? As Figures S4-10 and S4-12 illustrate, 94% of parents and 85% of staff members reported satisfaction with academic standards for students.

Teachers and administrators reported to the expert site visit team that the school administers several assessments, including ISTEP+, NWEA MAP, and Terra Nova. The team found that teachers and administrators "...are informed regarding how individual students performed on ISTEP+ and Terra Nova. It appears that they use these results to inform classroom practice to some extent." Some teachers, the team reported, said that "...they would like to better understand and be able to use existing data to better inform their teaching practice. The school might consider providing professional development on this topic."

According to the site team, the school's reading curriculum, Open Court, "...has a strong reading assessment component." The team, however, did not find through teacher reports or observations "...use of this assessment to inform decisions about instruction." Due to reports during the site visit of challenges associated with the timely and smooth completion of NWEA MAP testing, the team also

suggested that the school "...establish procedures so that the results from the NWEA MAP testing are available for use in a timely manner."

Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success? According to the expert site visit team, "all constituents [interviewed] agree the school provides a challenging and motivating academic environment. Classrooms are overall orderly and there are high expectations for all students." Teachers report spending little time on behavior management issues, and no one with whom the team spoke identified behavior management as a problem. Survey results show that, on a scale of one (very dissatisfied) to five (very satisfied), parents and staff members surveyed on average rated their satisfaction with classroom management and student behavior at 4.04 and 3.67 respectively.

Teachers and parents reported to the expert site visit team that the school administration "...is very open and supportive." The team particularly noted that "teachers report high levels of satisfaction with the school climate.... Administration and parents make them feel 'appreciated' and 'valued' and they receive a high level of support from both." All constituents reported that they share in the responsibility for maintaining a family-oriented environment. The team noted, for example, that "the education director ensures that parents know they are welcome and parents regularly support school initiatives and attend events. Parents in focus groups express that they have an important role to play in their child's education." Ninety-two percent of parents and 77% of staff members surveyed reported they were satisfied with the sense of pride students and teachers have in their school. As illustrated in Figure S4-10 and S4-12 respectively, 96% of parents and 85% of staff members surveyed reported satisfaction with the opportunities available for parent participation. More than nine out of ten parents surveyed were satisfied with the levels of parent involvement at Flanner House Elementary, but only 62% of staff members expressed satisfaction in this area.

The team reported that "students unanimously agree that teachers 'care' about them and 'challenge' them to do their best or to be 'excellent.'" The team commended the school on students' focus on helping one another; as one student remarked to the team, "Sometimes a new student doesn't know how we act in this school and we have to help them learn to be friendly and helpful."

The site team commended the school on its many rituals that reflect the school's strong culture. "For example, all classrooms have student greeters who introduce themselves and welcome guests to the classroom, and males rise when female guests enter the room." However, team members observed "...less consistency in these rituals across classrooms in spring 2004 as compared to earlier visits. These rituals and the general FHE culture are an important part of educating the 'whole child' and thus should be maintained."

As Figure S4-11 shows, 92% of parents and 85% of staff members surveyed reported their satisfaction with school safety.

Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?

Flanner House Elementary's mission emphasizes mastery of core skills based on Indiana standards. The site team reported that "classes focus on standards-based lessons in core subjects." Much of the work the site team observed students completing was student-focused. "Students were observed to be spending the majority of the time doing the work of learning themselves (versus listening to or watching the teacher) as they practiced writing, reading, mathematics and thinking. Teachers regularly monitor work and provide corrective feedback."

The site team commended the school on supplementing the curriculum with "grade-specific, project-based learning. Project-based learning supports the development of the whole child [central to the Flanner House Elementary mission] in that students can select topics in which they have abilities or

interests.” The team reported that “...the school provides a rubric with grading criteria (i.e., content, visual aid, research, and presentation) but the topic is selected and the work completed under the parent’s direction. Individual teachers also implement projects in classes. In one class, students regularly read and discuss the newspaper and in another class students monitor and track investments in their personal (and pretend) stock portfolio.”

The site team noted that “...writing was reported to be a priority for the school in 2003-04.” The team’s classroom observations, however, “...did not reveal high levels of student writing.” Additionally, students reported to the team that they edit one another’s papers but, the team reported, “...they did not appear to have a deep understanding or mastery of the peer editing process. It seems important to ensure student understanding and mastery of the skills that enable successful peer editing.”

Survey results show that nearly two-thirds of the staff surveyed at the charter school reported they were satisfied with the school’s ability to fulfill its stated mission.

Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful? In 2003, the expert site visit team reported that the school needed to improve processes related to communicating with parents. The team noted in recent visits that parents reported “‘really knowing what is happening’ with their children.... Much of the interaction among parents and teachers occurs informally during the times that parents are dropping off or picking up children or during school events.” The team reported that the school also provides a weekly newsletter for parents, and parents are required to personally pick up report cards. All parents with whom the site team spoke “...agreed that they have adequate information from the school.” The site team also noted that the school’s full-time parent coordinator is reported to “...work with parents on issues related to students and school events.”

As shown in Figure S4-10, 86% of Flanner House Elementary parents reported that they were satisfied with communication from their school, such as about special activities, events, and meetings. Eighty-five percent of parents and 62% of school staff also reported satisfaction with the information parents receive about student learning, as illustrated in Figures S4-10 and S4-12. In 2003, 100% of staff members surveyed expressed their satisfaction in this area.

Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?

The site team commended the school on steps it has taken to improve support for teachers. “In 2002-03, teachers reported a need for time to discuss and share ideas. In 2003-04, teachers had regularly scheduled meetings that allow time for discussion and sharing of ideas related to student learning.”

The site team also commended the school on its plans to add an assistant or second director of education and full-time staff person for special education as the school grows.

Figure S4-13 shows how staff members responded to a survey about their satisfaction with professional features of the school. Of note, 85% of staff reported dissatisfaction with benefits.

Figure S4-13. Staff satisfaction with Flanner House Elementary School's professional features

School Feature	Average rate of satisfaction ¹ (5=Very Satisfied)	Satisfied ²	Neutral	Dissatisfied ³
Competitive salary structure	3.00	46%	15%	38%
Competitive benefits (e.g., health insurance, etc.)	1.67	0%	8%	85%
Work environment	3.54	54%	31%	15%
Amount of paperwork required	4.00	85%	15%	0%
Opportunities for professional development	3.08	38%	38%	23%
Evaluation or assessment of performance	3.92	77%	8%	15%
Hours spent engaged in classroom instruction ⁴	4.36	91%	9%	0%
Hours spent engaged in other activities ⁴	3.91	73%	27%	0%
Time allowed for planning and preparation ⁴	3.18	36%	45%	18%
Level of teacher autonomy in the classroom ⁴	3.89	60%	30%	0%
Level of teacher involvement in school decisions ⁴	3.64	55%	36%	9%
Teachers' non-teaching responsibilities ⁴	3.91	82%	18%	0%
Time staff spend together discussing individual student needs ⁴	3.50	36%	55%	0%

Source: All results are from confidential surveys of Mayor-sponsored charter school staffs administered in spring 2004 by the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on survey protocol and analysis.

Note: Calculations do not include missing responses. Satisfaction percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding and "don't know" responses.

¹Satisfaction rated on a scale of 1-5: 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = satisfied, 5 = very satisfied. Rating calculations do not include "don't know" responses.

²Includes "very satisfied" and "satisfied" responses.

³Includes "very dissatisfied" and "dissatisfied" responses.

⁴Only staff members with instructional responsibilities responded to this question.

Detailed Description of Flanner House Elementary's Programs and Activities

Source: The information below was provided by the school to the Mayor's Office. It is provided here to offer a more detailed picture of the school's programs and activities.

Mission, philosophy, and educational program

Flanner House Elementary School's mission is to develop the highest potential of its students through educating the "whole person" and ensuring that all students attain basic skill proficiency appropriate to their ages and grade levels. By fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills, Flanner House Elementary seeks to build a solid foundation and provide positive motivation for life-long learning among its students.

The school bases its educational approach on the belief that children acquire genuine self-esteem through academic accomplishment. Flanner House Elementary offers small classes, dedicated teachers, and individualized attention to each student. The students and families also benefit from the extensive family support services available on-site through the school's parent organization, Flanner House of Indianapolis.

Flanner House Elementary School strives to create an atmosphere that encourages academic achievement and recognizes the importance of hard work and personal responsibility. The school uses the nationally recognized and research-based Open Court Reading and Everyday Mathematics curricula. Starting as early as Kindergarten, students undertake research projects that culminate in written and oral presentations.

Parents play a key role at Flanner House Elementary through their active participation and support. Volunteer parents are in the school daily, tutoring students one on one, reading along with students, and organizing field trips and other activities. Parents sign a covenant agreeing to work collaboratively with school personnel on the success of their children's education. Parents are also expected to volunteer 20 hours per semester, and most do far more. The school does not send quarterly grades home; instead parents are invited to come to school for conferences where teachers personally deliver report cards. Nearly all parents attended all four conferences last year; teachers spoke by phone with every parent who missed a conference.

Academic programs and initiatives

- *Research Projects.* Students in all grades – including Kindergarten – are required to complete four research projects per year, which are designed to develop students' abilities to perform research, prepare written reports, and speak publicly. Each student selects a topic to teach to the class, and typically researches the subject at the on-campus public library. To teach their peers about the topic, students produce colorful posters or other visual aids, outline their presentations, and dress appropriately as presenters. A few recent topics have included first aid, story telling, events that occurred on a student's birthday, science projects, and historic figures.
- *School Pride.* Students learn to take pride in Flanner House Elementary, whether by taking turns as formal greeters at school functions or by singing welcome songs to classroom visitors. Older students are taught to be examples for younger students by looking out for one another and committing to guide the younger children. For example, the fifth grade class adopted the Kindergarten class; fifth grade students join the Kindergartners on field trips and read to them before and after school.

Parent involvement

- *Parent Involvement.* Parental involvement is the cornerstone of Flanner House Elementary, with families playing an integral part in their children's education. Again this year, 100% of parents fulfilled this commitment and many volunteered even more hours than they were asked. For example, one parent contributed his whole vacation to ensuring that the Flanner House Elementary computer system was switched over to a new mainframe, saving the school from high technology costs.
- *Parent Liaison.* The school shares a full-time parent liaison with Flanner House Higher Learning Center. The parent liaison coordinates communication between parents and teachers about school meetings and activities.
- *Parent-Teacher-Family Committee.* The Flanner House Elementary Parent-Teacher-Family Connection has about 75 active members. The committee works closely with the parent liaison to facilitate communication with parents. This year it organized school-wide events including Teachers' Appreciation Week, during which families brought gifts to teachers every day, and culminated the week with a buffet luncheon. The committee also organized a Spaghetti Supper for families in the spring, at which 100% of students' families were represented by at least one family member.

The families of students at Flanner House Elementary very enthusiastically support school activities. Whenever teachers seek parent volunteers for their classrooms or activities such as field trips, they note precisely how many volunteers they seek. Otherwise, the sign-up sheet will be overflowing with names of parents who want to participate. Parents take advantage of every opportunity to be part of the life of the school. This year, over 370 people attended the first family gathering of the school year, a skating party organized by the Parent-Teacher-Family committee. At the school's awards night in the spring, held at the Indiana Historical Society, there were many people standing even though the venue had 300 seats for family members.

- *Parent/Teacher Contact.* Parents and teachers at Flanner House Elementary are in contact on a regular basis, in many cases daily. The school offers bus transportation, but the students' families prefer to bring their children to school and pick them up after school – as a result, no families elected to use the transportation offered by the school. Many parents use this opportunity to come into the classroom and talk with their child's teacher. As described above, Flanner House Elementary achieves 100% participation in quarterly parent/teacher conferences.

Supplemental programs and activities

- *Before- and After-School Programs.* The school offers before- and after-school educational activities for students. These activities include reading and writing exercises, tutoring in language arts and math, reading in the library, games, physical education, and nutrition.
- *Drum Ensemble.* A drum ensemble was formed through a partnership with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra and the Pacers Foundation. Staff from the Symphony provided drum lessons for approximately 25 students after school two times each week.
- *Summer Enrichment.* In summer 2004 approximately 80 students attended a summer enrichment program on-site, with educational components focusing on language arts, math, and writing. Through a partnership funded by Youth In Arts, artists work with students on-site in activities such as creative arts, acting, and drumming. Federal Title I funding is used to provide teachers to teach math and language arts twice daily.
- *Community Service Projects.* Throughout the school year, the children had an on-going food drive to donate food to seniors enrolled in Flanner House Multi-Service Center's seniors programs. Additionally, the Kindergarten class adopted the Flanner House seniors and gave musical performances for them throughout the school year.
- *Health Education.* Through a grant from the Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Agency, the children annually receive information on tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse. A health educator from the Flanner House Multi-Service Center provides these lessons. The health educator also conducts lessons in health education and physical education throughout the year and provides fitness tips during National Health and Fitness Month.

A tragic fire burned the home of a student at Flanner House Elementary this year. Since she had lost her uniform in the fire, this student did not want to come to school the next day. The principal told her to come anyway, and one of her classmates delivered one of her spare uniforms to the student. Over the next few days numerous school families chipped in to provide the girl and her family with new clothes. Similar support from families was evident when a parent of a student at Flanner House Elementary got sick for an extended period. She had no family in the city, so five families helped look after her daughter by cooking meals and bringing the daughter to school.

Community partnerships and donations

- *Free Museum Visit.* The school received an anonymous grant that covered the cost of transportation and admission for 80 students to take a field trip to the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art.
- *Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra.* The Symphony provided free tickets for 25 students and parents to attend a performance by the Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis Percussion Band at the Indiana Historical Center. The students, who received drum lessons from the Symphony staff during the school year, performed at a special event at the Children's Museum.
- *Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS).* Flanner House houses a satellite IPS Kindergarten program that has been on-site for more than 25 years. Another long-standing partnership with IPS, the GED program, has met two nights a week on-site for over 15 years. Some family members of Flanner House Elementary students participate in the GED program.
- *Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library.* Flanner House Elementary students and parents frequently use the Flanner House branch of the public library located within the school building.

For example, students use the library for their quarterly research projects. The library has donated a large collection of children's books to the school. Students also participate in workshops presented for the Flanner House neighborhood by library staff on such topics as the Tuskegee Airmen and the history of the Flanner House area.

- *Fifth Third Bank.* Bank staff visited classrooms monthly to present information on savings and banking careers. They also held workshops for parents about homeownership opportunities in the neighborhood.

Staffing

- *Award-Winning School Director.* The Mayor of Indianapolis' Excellence in Education Award was presented to the school's Director of Education Frances Malone in September 2003. During her three decade tenure at Flanner House, she has directed the child development center, and more recently the elementary school since its pre-charter founding as a private school. Reflecting the close-knit learning community she has created, some of the students at the elementary school have parents and grandparents who themselves attended early childhood or after-school programs at Flanner House under Mrs. Malone's guidance.
- *Teacher of the Week.* The third grade teacher, Pierre Britton, received recognition from the *Indianapolis Recorder* when he was selected for its feature, "Teacher of the Week." The newspaper identified him when three students from his class received awards (including one who received the grand prize) in an essay contest sponsored by the Brightwood Library.
- *Staff Collaborations.* The teaching staff meets together as a group once a week to share best practices, alternating between team-teaching meetings and a whole teaching staff meeting with the director of education.
- *Staff Evaluation.* The director of education meets individually with each teacher once every two or three weeks, and is in each of the classrooms regularly. This frequent contact ensures that communication is open between the director and all teachers. A formal classroom observation is performed annually for each teacher.
- *Professional Development.* Much of the professional development this past year focused on developing students' writing skills. Open Court curriculum trainers gave workshops at the school, observed classrooms, and worked one-on-one with teachers.

School management

- Administrators at the school have delineated roles and responsibilities to allow each individual to focus on particular responsibilities. The school director, Cynthia A. Diamond, provides the administrative leadership to all school personnel in carrying out the overall goals and objectives of the school. Mrs. Diamond plans and organizes a structure capable of accomplishing the goals, writes grants, assesses the degree to which policies and practices are attained, and plans responses to address the school's needs. The director of education, Frances Booker-Malone, oversees learning and teaching at the school. She evaluates the results of student testing programs and other evaluative measures used by the school for continuous improvement of the school program. She supports and encourages staff to seek and utilize innovative instructional methods, administers normal disciplinary measures in the school, and supervises and evaluates all instructional personnel. The business manager/start-up coordinator, DeNeen Owens-Collins, is responsible for monitoring the school's budget and expenditures. Mrs. Collins also compiles all financial information for reports, writes grants and maintains school records. The director of public relations and communications, Libby Scott, is responsible for community outreach, recruitment planning, informational and promotional materials, media relations and grant writing.

School governance

- Flanner House Elementary School has an active Board of Directors that meets monthly. The members of the Board perform additional committee work and attend special events sponsored

by the school. The Board is responsible for ensuring that the mission and vision of the school are maintained and oversees staff members' steady pursuit of that mission and vision. The Board is responsible for: setting general curricular policies and reviewing specific curriculum choices on a regular basis; hiring and evaluating the performance of the school director; and setting overall school policies. It currently has seven members and is actively recruiting two additional members. The Board's current composition includes: a parent (a computer specialist), an attorney, an educator (a retired principal of both elementary and middle schools), an individual holding an MBA, a businessman, a human resources executive (who recently completed his doctorate in education), and a corporate executive.

Facilities

- Flanner House Elementary is located in the near northwest area of Indianapolis on the campus of the Flanner House of Indianapolis. The main school building houses Kindergarten through grade 2, as well as the school's office and a public library branch. Four spacious modular units are adjacent to the primary school building and house grades 3-5. Flanner House has developed capital improvement plans to expand the campus in the near future.